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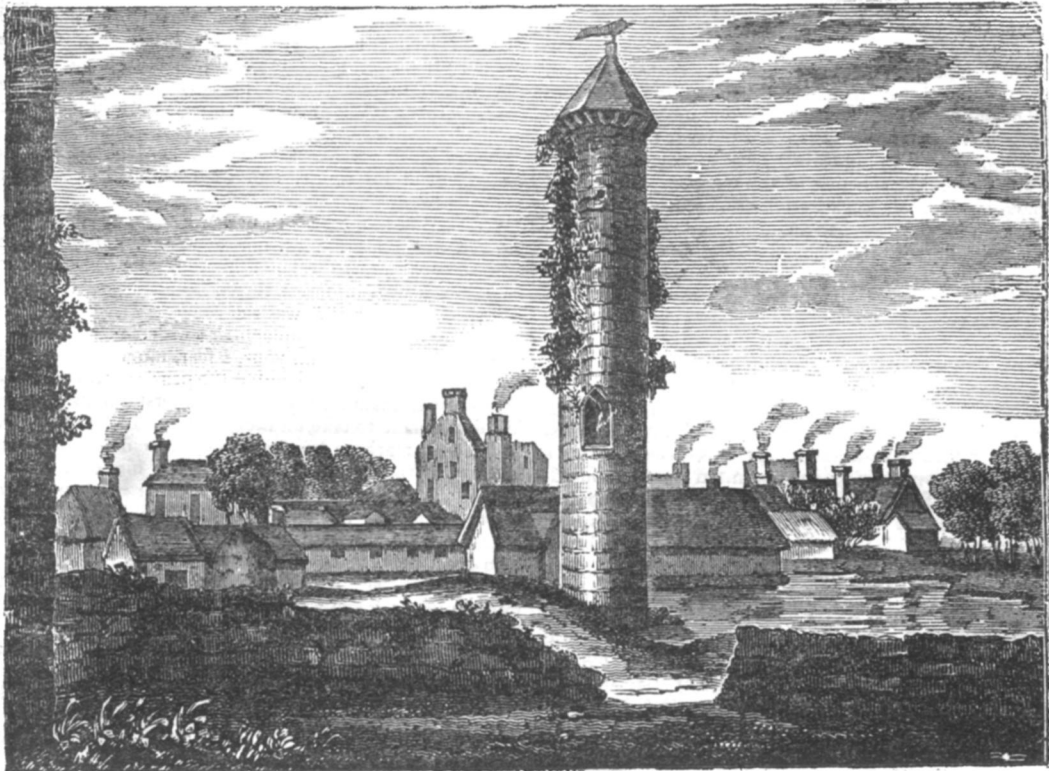
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ROUND TOWER AT ROSCREA.

**ROUND TOWER AT ROSCREA**

This tower is eighty feet high, and fifteen feet in diameter, with two steps round it at the bottom. At fifteen feet from the bottom is a window, with a regular arch, and at an equal height is another window with a pointed arch. If this latter is not a more recent addition, which it probably is not, it certainly reduces the date of this tower to the twelfth century, which is rather earlier than the time allowed for the use of this arch.

Anciently a great annual fair was held here on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul, for fourteen days. The Danes, in the year 942, formed a design to surprise and pillage the merchants assembled here; but they were defeated, with the loss of Olfinn their commander, and four thousand men slain. When the English arrived in this isle, they soon extended their power into Munster; and as they proceeded, secured themselves by strong castles and garrisons. After some contests with Mortogh, king of North Munster, they obtained Roscrea; and in 1213, founded a strong castle in it, as a barrier against the attempts of the natives on that side. This ancient fortress is at present in a good state of preservation, and no small ornament to the town, as is seen in the back ground of this view.

A.

**THE WAKE.**

The period at which we commence our sketch, was one when a spirit of insubordination and resistance to the authorities began to manifest itself all through Ireland, but more particularly in the southern parts. There outrage was followed by outrage; some were even committed in

the broad day; and any one who was considered to differ in opinion with the midnight legislators, was sure of a hostile visit. The peasantry doggedly resisted every description of impost or taxes, but more particularly tithe; and large parties, headed by some leader, scoured the country round each night, taking up arms, and swearing the terrified inhabitants against paying any government demands, particularly that one set apart for the use of the clergy. If any individual dared to disobey this command, a notice signed "Captin Moonshine," or "Captin Cardher," or some other fantastical appellation, was sure to be found nailed to his door; and if he did not comply with its order of departure from his house and lands, he was generally either mutilated, or forced by nightly visits eventually to leave the country. Such was the state of the south at this period, that although government had sent down troops to suppress all outrage, the same practices were still carried on; and such was the daring ingenuity of the disturbers, that they had almost entirely escaped detection.

On a bright and sunny day in June, large bodies of the peasantry were observed collecting in different parties on the heights surrounding the little town of W—. They all seemed incited by some common purpose, and as they met, exchanged salutations, if not altogether silent, at least only consisting of a muttered "God save you," or "good morra." The majority of the multitude was composed of strong, able-bodied men, whose bent brows, and frowning features, had something very fearful in appearance, and yet there were women, and even children too, amongst them, each evidently accompanying a father or a husband. By degrees they continued to advance, till at length they assembled in considerable numbers at the mar-

ket-place, and thronged up all the avenues surrounding the town. There they stood in little knots together, conversing in whispers, and keenly watching the proceedings of a military party, who occupied the centre round which they had collected. This last named body consisted of thirty mounted dragoons and a young officer, who were guarding about eleven or twelve head of cattle seized the day before for non-payment of tithe. They had collected there for the purpose of setting them up at auction, and were somewhat disturbed by the appearance of the multitude, who evidently had assembled for no friendly purpose. It was a strange and unusual sight in that little town; the armed troopers, with their proud and pawing war horses, eyeing with much appearance of hatred and distrust the sullen, dark body of men before them, and the loosely clad, athletic-limbed peasantry, gradually increasing in number, their silence resembling a deep volcano, ready to burst into fury and destruction. The deep, indistinct buzz of voices, the lowing of the cattle, the snorting of the troopers' horses, and the clanging of their arms and accoutrements, that glittered in the noonday sun, had a bustling and martial sound, quite strange to the peaceable inhabitants of the town. They might be seen mingling amongst them, and watching their movements with deep and fearful interest.

Cow after cow was set up, and yet there appeared no bidder; and at each failure the multitude nearest them set up a wild shout of derision, which was echoed by their companions in the rear, while the muttered curses of the troopers, and the impatient manner in which they checked the curvetting of their steeds, spoke of feelings and passions with difficulty restrained. At this period, a figure slowly moved from behind the mounted party, and advanced to their front. He was clad in a loose coat of blue frieze, open at the breast, corduroy breeches, and woollen stockings; his hat was pulled deeply on his brow, and his keen, suspicious eyes glanced round about, with habitual caution, mingled with not a little fear. As soon as he was perceived, the whole multitude seemed as if actuated but by one impulse; they drew closer to the dragoon, grasped their sticks firmly in their hands, and set up a roar of hatred and invective absolutely frightful from its wild bitterness. Occasionally, too, curses loud and deep were heard above even their wildest shouts, such as "Bad loock attind the murdering proctor!"—"Och, tin thousand curses descind on you, Dinis Kelly!"—"Atin' an' dhrinkin', sleepin' an' wakin', no pace to the vile informer," &c. &c, which he heard with a slight shudder, and a deeper frowning of his shaggy eye-brow.

After a little, another cow was brought forward, but the voice of the setter up could not be heard, so loud had the murmured curses of the multitude continued. However, he that they had dubbed Dinis Kelly bid for it, and it was knocked down to him at a few shillings. As he began to drive it from the place where it was standing, a shower of execrations was poured upon him from the crowd, and a few large stones were flung by the hinder party, one of which felled him to the earth, and another of which struck the young officer commanding the detachment. The troop immediately formed into order, facing the large, dark mass of human beings, whose demon shouts, and terrible curses, still made fearful uproar, while the trembling proctor, with his head streaming with blood, conceiving from this movement that they were about to desert him, in abject accents implored them to stay. Their leader having consulted for a moment or two with a grey-headed serjeant, the second in command, walked his horse slowly to their threatening front, and desired them to disperse in quiet; upon which the mass opposite to where he stood opened a little, and an individual advanced from their uneven ranks, and stood grasping a blackthorn stick within about three yards of the youthful commandant. He was a fine specimen of the bold and hardy peasant—his frame was firmly and regularly moulded, and the flashing of his proud eye told of a spirit that quailed not at the fear of man.

"Sassenagh," he began, "you ordher us to disperse in quiet, an' it aint the fear ov your swords or pistols 'ill make us obey: bud as we mane no harum to you or yours, iv you surrindhur to our keepin' that thrimblin' thraitor, Dinis Kelly, we'll separate athrow farther annoyin' or intherrupin' you."

Here a loud cheer from his companions told that he had spoken their sentiments; and the being of whom he spoke, on hearing his demand, listened with an intense eagerness, as if his welfare in this world and the next depended on the answer.

"Denis Kelly," answered the officer, "is here under my protection, and I dare not disobey my orders by deserting him. But, whether or no, I would not give him up to men seemingly thirsting for his blood. Again I desire you to disperse quietly—we are well armed, and can enforce obedience."

A low scoffing sound proceeded from the dark body, as their leader answered—"Agin I tell you, we don't dhread yer power, nor fear yer shinin' arms; bud we must get a grip ov the thievin' proctor that's shiverin' an' shakin' there forenint us—as unasy as a hin on a hot gridle."

A low laugh passing through the crowd testified their enjoyment of his simile, and he continued in the same sneering tone—

"Just sind him across to us as we wish, an' we'll throuble you wid no more ov our company. Don't you see how aiger we are to welcum him, an' the omedhawn, not knowin' his own intherest, thryin' to avoid us."

"One word for all," was the reply, "while life lasts, I will never disobey my commander's orders; so Denis Kelly is, and will be, safe from your, I fear, murderous designs."

"Gintly, agra!" interrupted the peasant, still preserving his sneering manner, "you misundherstand us a thrife. We don't mane to take his life, the coward I bud jist merely to lave our mark on him by way of tachein' him to behave better for the future. Jist to sthrip him ov a taste ov his ugly nose or ears; bud by no manner ov manes to destroy his beauty out and out, which takin' his life might chance to do. So don't you stan' in our way, an' it 'ill be a great improvemint to him intirely."

"Your insolent manner shall not sway me," was the rapid answer: "while I can wield a sword, he never shall be in your power."

"Then sorra a fut ye'll lave this till we saize him, an' no thanks to ye," impetuously exclaimed the spokesman, throwing off all reserve; upon which the blood rushed in a tumult to the young officer's cheek, and exclaiming, "insolent scoundrel, dare you threaten?" he made his horse spring forward to overturn the speaker; but he, bounding lightly aside, with one blow of his cudgel, given with lightning-like celerity, sent the uplifted sword many feet into the air, and retreated again to his party, while their shouts of exultation and defiance, seemed to rend the very skies. The whole mounted party upon this advanced, and the peasantry did not move an inch, but the shouting ceased, and they remained in stiff silence as if awaiting an attack. The officer, who had again recovered his sword, made a second effort to move the mob to obedience, but without effect; and as their menacing appearance was increasing every instant, he gave orders to his own men to form a square with the proctor in the centre, and they slowly retrograded from their numerous opponents. For every inch of ground they moved away, the whole multitude regularly advanced another; and as they left the town, and came upon the high road, they perceived that the fields on each side were filled with men, advancing as if to impede their progress. The dangers of the handful of troops seemed momentarily to increase; and the occasional shouts of the multitude sent a chill to their very hearts. As to the being they protected, he seemed almost paralysed with fear, and at every wild cry he shuddered, as if he heard his death knell. His feelings were easily seen from the wistful glances that he cast from side to side, and the look of ill-suppressed agony, with which he viewed the rudely chiselled stone that told of their being many miles from succour. At length they arrived at a part of the road which was deep and narrow, besides being flanked by a high wall on one side, and a thick hedge at the other. There the first symptoms of an attack began to manifest themselves, as a huge shower of stones, and other missiles, descended on the troopers from each side of the road, while loud cries of "give up the thraitor!"—"Turn out the black proctor," &c. were heard above the loud hurroo with which the shower of missiles was accom-

panied. The escort suddenly stopped, unslung their carbines, and faced round to the crowd; when their officer again advanced a little, and desired, nay entreated them to retire. The same individual that had before held parley with him, who seemed their principal, if not their only leader, also advanced a little in front of his party, and made answer,

"Let us take Dinis Kelly, an' thrate him as we plase, an' thin we'll retire athout molestin' you."

"You have already heard my sentiments on that point," was the determined answer, "he never shall be surrendered up."

"We told you we didn't intend takin' his life, bud only a bit ov him, jist by the way ov a thridin' keepsake," again quietly observed the peasant; "an' it 'ill be betther for you not to attempt to stop us, so take the thing asy, an' hand him over here."

"I perceive you are determined on violence," said the officer, retiring to the front of his own party, "and now desire you to depart for the last time, or I will order my men to fire."

A shower of stones more violent than the former one, was the answer to this last remark; and he gave the word of "ready" and "present," in a cool, unshaken tone of voice. Ere the last, fatal word passed his lips, he looked once more towards the crowd, and they all were stationary, seemingly wavering a little whether to advance or not, till the same voice that had spoken their sentiments shouted—

"Hurroo, boys, give the bloody sodgers another volley," and then another rush of stones flew like hail amongst the troopers. He hesitated no longer, but gave the word, "fire." There was a loud report, a bright flash, and three of the foremost of the assailants, fell desperately wounded; while their former spokesman, who headed them, suddenly stopped in his career, clenched his outstretched hands, with convulsive violence, and fell to the earth, his heart's blood gushing from the wound.

The vaunting crowd were actually paralysed with surprise. They thronged round the body of their leader, and of the three other wounded, and gazed upon them with a kind of stupid stare. Some hastily retreated—others, but they were very few, made a movement as if for revenge; but the majority felt all their evil passions as if suddenly quelled by some unseen power, and with deep and bitter grief surrounded the body of their leader—lately exulting in the consciousness of strength, now a lifeless mass, cold, still, and feelingless! After some slight interruption, and a couple of harmless volleys, the soldiers were suffered to depart; and the younger and more hot-headed, who had followed them for the purpose of revenge, returned to their companions, crest-fallen and silent. There was a litter of boughs hastily constructed for the wounded, and another for the dead, and in a few minutes more the entire group had departed. The calm sun still shone with unclouded beauty. All was peace below, and there was no mark, save a small pool of black blood, to tell that a human being had been writhing there in the last dreadful agonies of departing life—the keen and fearful throes with which the spirit leaves its tenement of clay!

It was the interior of a large barn, that stood within a few miles of the spot where the sanguinary occurrence we have just related took place. Groups of men and women sat in different companies around the walls, which had been originally whitewashed, but time, the destroyer! had then given them a dingy appearance, which suited well with the gloomy aspect of the place. The light at the upper end was exceedingly brilliant, but the lower came under the expressive denomination of "darkness visible;" and the effect of the entire was very fine—one half of the figures distinctly seen, and the other sitting in the deep shade, save when now and then a pale ray of moonlight streaming through the open door, lit up their rugged features. It was a scene only to be met with in our native land—a genuine Irish wake! At the upper end of the barn, supported on a low and hastily constructed frame, lay the body, "dacin'ty dhressed wid clane linen," and already placed in the coffin. The features were strongly marked and regular, bearing no trace of agony or torture; but they looked doubly pale from the bright glare of twelve candles placed at regular distances, six on each

side. The lid was laid athwart the coffin so as to form the appearance of a cross, and on a bright plate in its centre was rudely engraven, "Bryan Murphy, aged 27"—he was the leader of the peasants, whose melancholy death we have before spoken of. On the lid were several saucers, containing pipes, tobacco, and snuff, which as soon as emptied were regularly replenished; and that was pretty often, as at a wake every peasant takes care to fill his horn snuff-box and tobacco pouch, they being luxuries he does not meet with every day. There were four or five aged females sitting about the coffin, conversing in low tones, and sometimes giving utterance to a deep, melancholy, and by no means unmusical wail, as the merits of the deceased chanced to come under discussion. They were the keeners, but were not then employed in their vocation, as they were talking of the circumstances under which Bryan had met his death, and hazarding various conjectures as to whether it would be revenged. Large jugs of punch, composed of the "raal stuff," that "niver grew wake at the sight ov a murderin' gauger," were occasionally handed round by the more youthful of the party; and many a comely "boy," and black-eyed "colleen," was sitting apart from the group, and "coortin away quite cozily." Their parents, in the mean time, perhaps, were pledging each other to the happiness of the young folk—that is, when no obstacle intervened, and when the boy, besides being "clane an' likely," was steady and industrious, while the colleen, "havin' got the dacin'ty rarin' an' broughtin' up, an' the idication," in addition to it was careful and thrifty, besides "havin' a thrilde ov goold" to purchase a cow or pig. The occasional exclamation of "Arrah, Jim, be asy!" uttered half pettishly, half in good-humour, whenever it reached the ear of the aforesaid parents, caused a smile to pass over their quiet features; and the feeling that prompted that smile, often stealing to their hearts, reminded them of their own young days, to which era they looked back with pride, and a something like regret. About the centre of the barn, on an elevated seat, was Murdock, the blind piper, and near him almost all the youthful of both sexes were posted. They were busily engaged in supplying him with punch, knowing from experience that when a trifle elevated he played with double vigour; and sure enough, having drank as much as would float a small navy, he seized his pipes, and after one or two discordant symphonies, began "the wind that shakes the barley." A tight-limbed boy immediately bounded forward, half leading, half dragging a cherry-cheeked and seemingly reluctant girl; and then with a kind of introductory or animating whoop, began "tatterin' away fur the bare life." His partner, the moment she "felt the boord undher her," lost all affectation of modesty, and "wel'ted the flure" with as much rapidity of motion, and precision, as if her life depended on keeping time. Then the shouts of "hurroo, the little darlin'!"—"maybe she doesn't thrush it i' style!"—"throth, she'll tire you!"—the laughter and the good-humoured taunts occasionally interchanged—made it appear one merry-making scene, and as if such a thing as grief were not in the world. But by degrees the shouts grew less and less frequent, the laughter less loud; and when the cessation of the music told that the dance had ended, each swain led his drooping partner to a seat. The remarks of the elder party as they passed them by, were in this strain—"Deuce take the boy in the counthry aquil to him, any how!"—"Jist observe the purty crathur athout the sign of hate on her, an' she afther tirin' down a pair ov them—musha, good loock atind her!"—while a thought of what they formerly had accomplished themselves, gave their faces a placid serene expression.

The bustle and the laughter grew more and more boisterous as the potteen began to be profusely distributed, till suddenly every sound of merriment ceased, and every eye was fixed intently on a figure that stood for a moment at the opened door, with the moonlight streaming full on her white dress, and then slowly approached the coffin, speaking not as she passed along. It was Ellen Murphy, the wife of the deceased, who when her husband was brought home, all pale and bloody, seemed as if she had received a death-stroke—she did not utter a single exclamation—did not shed a single tear, but one heart-breaking sob burst

from her quivering lips, and she fell into the arms of her brother, senseless and seemingly without life. She had remained in that state during the two days that, according to custom, they kept the body, the slightest breathing alone telling that she yet lived; and the reader may judge of the surprise of all at seeing her entering the barn. Her attendant had stolen to take a "peep at the fun," and at that precise moment awaking from her stupor, every thing was revealed to her at one instant's thought, so rising from her bed, she hastily huddled on some loose clothing, and appeared as we have described.

Her head was bending over the pale fixed features of her husband, and her long coal-black hair, which was dishevelled and unbound, floated along the white drapery that shrouded the body of the dead. A thick choking sob, with a low wail of bitter grief, occasionally burst from her lips, and at length rising her head, she flung back her dark hair and revealed her pale and marble features, agonized and full of deep distress: then she began a wild chaunt or keening in her native tongue, her body swaying to and fro "like a reed shaken by the wind," as if in harmony with her song of grief. The conclusion of each sentence was caught up by the keeners on each side, and prolonged with a deep and melancholy cadence. It ran as follows—

"Oh! husband of my heart! you have left me now in sorrow—I mourn beside thy cold form."—"My heart is breaking—it will soon cease to beat, and I'll be laid low."—"Beside my love I'll rest ere long, and the green grass will grow above my head."—"Strong was your arm in the fight, and yet your heart was soft—you would not harm a

child."—"Proud was I once to be your choice, but now you are cold and dead, ullah!"—"I'll never see thy smile again, to warm me like the summer noon-day sun."—"Your little child will cry out 'Father,' but you will not be there to stop his mouth with kisses."—"You have gone from me for ever. I care not for life, since you have ceased to live."—"Oh! husband of my soul! would I were laid beside thee, with the cold cold earth for my pillow."—"Oh! pulse of my heart! I will not live to see thy name forgotten: we will rest in the same deep silent grave, ullah."

There was something irresistibly touching in her overwhelming grief, and in the deep pathos of her melancholy chant, that gradually became lower and lower, till at length, with one wild, prolonged, quivering wail from the keeners, it entirely died away, and all again was silence. Then after a little commenced the buzz of voices, and at intervals the merry laugh—for such is the mercurial nature of the Irish feelings, that sadness rests on them but for a season. But the dance was not again resumed, neither was the bustle so loud as before, as "it wouldn't be decent afore the widow." She—poor bereaved one! sat like a statue, unmindful of all around her—life, passion, and feeling all concentrated in one wistful gaze upon the features of the silent dead: he was her all, and without him she felt that she was alone in the wide world—alone and in misery!

Bryan Murphy was decently interred on the following day, and his afflicted widow survived him but a very few months.

OSCAR.



MARKET PLACE OF ATHLONE

Athlone is a considerable town, situated about seventy miles north by west from Dublin. It has been rendered rather an important station as commanding the passage of the Shannon, on which it is situated, and by means of which it communicates with the Grand Canal. It is partly in the county of Westmeath, and province of Leinster, and partly in the county of Roscommon, and province of Connaught; the divisions made by the Shannon, being united by a well-built bridge. The place was formerly rich in antiquities: but they were nearly all destroyed during the civil wars; the castle still remains, defended by numerous guns. We are informed by Archdall, that

an Abbey was founded here for Cistercian monks, under the invocation of St. Peter. Other writers give the dedication to St. Benedict, and say it was founded for monks of his order. In a table of the procurations of the church of Elphin, this is called the Monastery de Innocentiâ. In that part called the *English Town*, situate on the east coast of the Shannon, a monastery was founded for Conventual Franciscans by Cathal, or Charles Croibh Dearg O'Connor, Prince of Connaught, who, not living to finish the building, it was completed by Sir Henry Dillon. The country round Athlone is flat, and has few natural beauties to recommend it.